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ABSTRACT

This booklet contains a selection of stories written by children for the Canadian Broadcast Corporation Mackenzie's "Write a Good Story and Get Your Name on the Radio" contest, many of which were originally broadcast on a morning information radio program. The booklet's 50 selections are each accompanied by the author's name, grade, and town. (SR)

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RAPPIN' RAVEN

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Northwest Territories Education

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RAPPIN' RAVEN

Edited by Debby Dobson
Yellowknife 1990

Northwest Territories Education

Kids are fun to listen to, and they've got important things to say.

CBC Mackenzie's Write a Good Story and Get Your Name On the Radio Contest has been verifying those simple facts for four years running.

The evidence stands before you in this selection of some of the best entries submitted to our contest in the two previous years.

If you listen to CBC Mackenzie, this may not be the first time you've encountered some of the lively and entertaining stories contained here.

Many were originally broadcast on our morning information radio program, Mackenzie Morning.

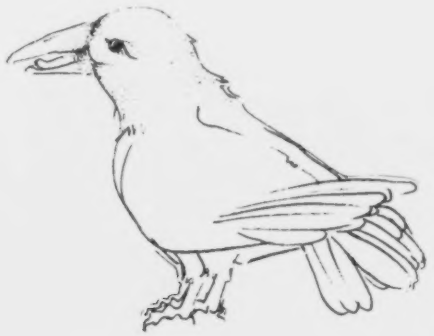
Sharing kids' writing with a broader audience and acknowledging the writing accomplishments of our young people have always been essential elements of the Write a Good Story and Get Your Name on the Radio Contest.

So we're very pleased that the territorial department of education for the second time in the life of the contest has chosen to present a selection of entries in print form.

It can only serve to encourage our student writers all the more.

And after all, that's what it's all about.

Stay tuned
Dave Miller
Mackenzie Morning



RAPPIN' RAVEN

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MY GRANDPA AND I AT THE CABIN

Brent Piwowar
Grade 5
Camsell St.
Paul's

One year ago I went hunting with my grandpa. First we went to the cabin to get his gun and his ski-doo. Then we went to check his traps. The first trap was a number 4. Those are very big traps. We caught a lynx in a number 4 and it was bleeding pretty badly because he had struggled. Then we got to the second trap. There was a mink and it was big. We caught it in a Conibear trap right around his head. He was dead. My grandpa was happy because he caught a big, big lynx.

The third trap we couldn't find because something was caught in it but it pulled the trap away from the hut. It was a whisky jack and it tried to eat the bait.

There were more traps that we had to check on the way back. We saw some caribou tracks and then we saw the caribou. There were two of them. They had big antlers and they walked right down the skidoo trail.

Then my grandpa drove right by them. They called like this, "Maururu, maururu." When we got back to the cabin we had three mink, four martin, five weasel and eight lynx. My grandpa said that was a pretty good catch today.

Maybe next week we will get more furs.

HUNTING WITH A FISHNET

Eddy Smith
Grade 6
Camsell St.
Paul's
Hay River

Part 1

People that hunt with fish nets usually use them to take fish out of the water, but not me!

In the summer of 1987, 10 miles out of Hay River, my brother Miles, my friend Lance Crook, my dog Blue and I went hunting squirrels. We didn't want to kill the squirrels so we used a fish net tied to the end of two broomsticks. We went hunting across the neighbours driveway in the bush. The bush was mostly willows, shrubs, weeds, grass and swamp. We started out in the ditch beside the highway. There was a small ditch that was about 2 1/2 meters across going through the bush that ran water through culverts all year round except winter. While we were walking along that ditch, we spotted a squirrel on the opposite side. Blue saw the squirrel too and followed along beside it.

Meanwhile, Lance, Miles and I were running along the ditch looking for a place to cross. Finally, we just gave up and tried to jump. Of course we got soaked when we jumped into the water. Blue by now was already across the ditch and chasing the squirrel and we ran along behind. The stupid fish net was so long that it got stuck between trees and the net hooked on branches so we went pretty slowly, even while hurrying.

Finally we caught up with Blue and she had treed the squirrel. We lifted up the net slowly but the net got hooked in the branches. We tried at least 20 times but the net kept getting hooked in the branches of that willow. So then we scared it into another tree, but we couldn't get it there either. So finally we just sat there and waited. Slowly the squirrel eased down the tree and Blue stiffened every muscle in her body, tensed and was ready to spring. Miles swung the net at it and missed. Now it was scurrying all over from tree to tree, trying to get away, but we blocked its way. All the while, Blue had been chasing it and was bounding along after it, tripping us and herself. Once the poor squirrel, in its haste, ran up Miles' leg and scared him half to death. The squirrel was so fast that we couldn't get near him with the fish net. It found its way up a tree and started jumping from tree to tree and the poor little guy slipped and fell. In a flash, Blue grabbed the squirrel and the squirrel breathed its last breath. It was very sad.

Part 2, The Chicken

One sunny Sunday morning in the summer of 1987, Miles, Blue and I went hunting again. This time we were hunting chickens, though. As soon as Blue got out of the house she took off south and barked up a pine tree. Miles had the net and we looked up into the tree, slowly Miles lifted the fish net up beside the stupid chicken and that dumb chicken just sat there. Miles scooped up the chicken and brought it gently down to the ground. The chicken was struggling so hard that it got tangled up. Finally the stupid chicken settled down and sat up patiently for Miles to get it out. It was the worst tangle that I had seen in all my life. Its head was through one hole, its wing through 4 others. It was weird. Boy!! And for some strange reason Blue stayed back but once in a while she would try to take a bite. The head was stuck through one of those tiny holes and the wings looked like they were woven in when the net was bought. In the end Miles had to cut one of the strings to let the chicken out. We got the chicken out, let it go and said goodbye.

THE TERRIBLE CHRISTMAS

Jamie Sanguez
Grade 6
Mildred Hall
Yellowknife

This is a true story about my dad and I when we went on a trip to Trout River where our cabin is.

It all started in Fort Providence. We were there and my dad and I were getting ready to leave for our cutline. My mom and sister were going to fly in the next day. Ted is our pilot. He gave my dad a C.B. and some red powder to mark out the runway. We left about 9 A.M. It was a long and boring drive.

We got to our cutline about 3:00 P.M. the same day. We unloaded the truck and I went to get the ski-doo and sled just up the trail. I came back and we loaded the sled. We were on our way in about half and hour. The trail was long and bumpy but we were relieved when we got to the Mackenzie River. As we were driving along the shoreline there was overflow ahead of us.

It was dark and we drove right into the overflow. My dad got off the machine and tried to push it out. He couldn't and we shut off the machine and started to walk all the way around the island with snow up to our waists. In about an hour we found a place were we could cross.

We got across and walked to our cabin. When we got there I made a fire in the stove and heated up some water. My dad's mukluks were covered in ice. He put his feet in the stove to unthaw. It took at least two and a half hours to unthaw. I made some coffee and some soup. After that we went to sleep and I kept the fire going all night.

When I got up in the morning my dad was up and he made some coffee. He went to the sled to get the red powder and the C.B. I stayed home and cleaned up the house. It took my dad about half an hour to get back. Then he went out on the Mackenzie to mark out the air strip. He came back and waited for the plane.

When we heard the plane we tried the C.B. but it didn't work. So we walked out to the airstrip and met them. We asked Ted if he wanted to come over for coffee, but he had to go back to Fort Providence. We went back to the cabin with a sled full of boxes.

We brought all the stuff inside. My mom and dad went to the ski-doo and they chipped the ice to get the machine free. Then they tried to get the sled out. My dad thought the sled was free so he hitched it up to the skidoo. He took off fast and when there was mo more rope left the ski-doo stopped. My dad flew over the wind shield and fell to the ground. He blacked out for a moment.

My mom ran to my dad to see if he was all right. He got up and cut the rest of the ice until the sled was free. About an hour and a half later they came back. We put the sled inside the house to unthaw. After that we had a very quiet Christmas together. I will never go with my dad alone to Trout River again.

MY FIRST FISHING TRIP

Camille Dumond
Grade 6
St. Patrick's
Yellowknife

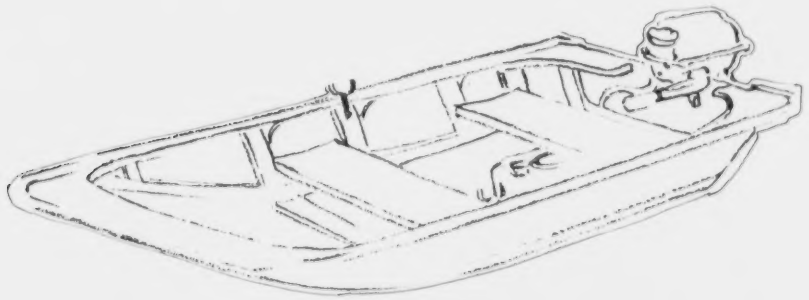
My first fishing trip took place when I was four years of age. I was, at the time, living in Acabonaca, which is a small, isolated, Indian reserve in Northern Ontario. I remember my sisters and I getting up early and bubbling around the kitchen being a huge nuisance to my parents. Then, packing up a picnic lunch, getting the fishing gear out of the dusty, old, green tackle box and heading out in our boat. However, it was not there, the boat that is. We looked everywhere until my father found it in some tall weeds. I was very excited and exuberant because I had never been on a real fishing trip.

Before I knew what hit me, I couldn't see the shore. That made me even more hyper. Soon, my family was at a quiet fishing spot. My mom and dad baited their lines and cast out, while my sisters and I watched. I remember the evergreen trees towering above me, the gentle lapping of the water on the boat, the quiet sereneness of it all and the fragrant scent of wild flowers swaying in the cooling breeze. From what I gather, I must have dozed off, because I was jolted out of it with my sisters screaming jubilantly in my ear about the fish my dad had caught. I must admit, it was an awfully gigantic, enormous, tremendously huge fish (which is a tiny, small, little bit exaggerated). Then it was my turn at bat. My parent's taught me how to bait the hook, cast it out and reel it back in. Since I wasn't catching anything, my father devised a plan to get a fish on his line then off-handedly give the line to me. Then I would think I had caught the fish! I didn't know it then but now I do.

When we had caught enough fish we went to a deserted island to roast them and have our picnic lunch. Upon finishing lunch we went exploring, looking into every crack and cranny, collecting mica, strangely shaped stones, and tid-bits of oddly coloured moss and lichens.

When it was time to go home, we went a different way and ran smack into some RAPIDS!!!! Up and down, down and up went the boat. It was like being in a washing machine. It was as wet as one too. We were all drenched with spray and foam by the time that roller coaster-like ride was over. Luckily that was soon over and the rest of the trip passed uneventfully.

I have never been so glad to see solid, firm land in my entire life! That night we had fresh fish fried in creamy smooth butter and crisp brown french fries. Fishing never has and probably never will be one of my strong points!!!



MY TRIP TO THE BARRENLAND

Evelyn Marlowe
Grade 11
Sir John Franklin
Yellowknife

One fall when the ice started to freeze along the shore, I went hunting out on the land. There were about 20 students, girls and boys and our principal from the school, who went on the trip to teach us how to live off the land. The Snowdrift Band paid for the expenses, such as chartering the airplane that we flew in to get to the barrenland and back and for food that we would be needing on our trip. They also gave us a mobile radio just in case of an emergency. We paid for our own junk food and brought the things we would be needing on the trip such as an axe, knife, hunting bag, sleeping bag, tent, stove, gun and so on from our house. This trip was for two weeks.

The day we flew to the barrenland, there was a lot of caribou. The boys flew over there in the first plane and the girls went in the second plane. After we all had a bite to eat we helped each other set up the tents just for that first night because we didn't have enough time to move because of darkness. The next day we moved to a better spot and carried the things on our backs, which was hard. We fixed up around our campsite so the next day we could go hunting. After that was done we had something to eat, talked and then we went to bed.

The next day the ladies stayed at the camp and their husbands separated the students into two groups. There were too many students hanging around together. The teacher also went out with one of the groups too. We packed the things we needed for hunting and took off. We walked for about two miles out of our campsite. There were a bunch of caribou and the man told us to go behind the rocks because they were coming toward us and to make sure they didn't see us. The caribou were quite far away, but they were seen through the binoculars.

We hid behind the rocks until they came closer to us and then we started shooting at the caribou. I had my dad's gun, a 22 rifle. The caribou took off running the other way from us, so we took off after them. They went a little ways and stopped. My friend and I had a gun, so we took off running towards the caribou. When we got closer, we started to crawl towards it. When we got closer the caribou saw us and started to run, but some weren't going fast at all so we started to run after them and stopped to shoot at them. My friend's gun wasn't working; and there were caribou coming towards us, so he started to run towards a big rock. I got scared too, so I started running after him with my gun which was working pretty well. After we got behind the big rock he tried to take my gun away and I said, "No way, I'm going to shoot a caribou because I have never shot a caribou in my life!" It was coming towards us, I don't know how many times I shot at it, but it finally fell to the ground. I had a big smile on my face and I gave my friend the gun. He took off from where I was and I could hear a lot of shooting. After a while he came back and said that he had shot a couple of caribou too. I told him to gut the caribou, so he took out his knife and started to cut it up. As he cut one of the intestines inside the caribou's stomach, it splattered all over his face. We both started laughing. After he cut it all up, we packed the meat and he also fixed and packed the caribou he shot. We had to make a couple of trips to bring them back to the campsite.

Well, it was a good experience, having to live off the land. It taught me that our elders had a tough life in order to survive. The best memory was of the hunting and of the cooperation with the other students.

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AS THE SUN WAS SETTING

Dean Robertson
Grade 11
Sir John Franklin
Yellowknife
Hay River

As the sun was setting, the warm spring freeze was beginning to cool down and I felt a chill run down my spine. My hands began to shake as the ice cold water dripped off the line onto my fingers.

There I was at Mosquito Creek, standing at the slippery, muddy edge, hoping I wouldn't fall in while I was fishing. My two brothers were upstream fishing as well but I couldn't see them. For some odd reason I felt alert and sensed danger near by. I glanced over at a nearby tree, making sure my 30-30 rifle was still leaning against it.

It was getting fairly dark. You couldn't see more than fifty yards through the dense bush. Thinking it was time to go home, I took the fish that I had caught and started to walk upstream. While walking I could see my brothers walking down the path toward me.

Suddenly a dark object appeared out of the bushes and stood in the centre of the path between me and my brothers. Because it was so dark I couldn't determine what it was, but when it turned sideways I could see that it was a monstrous black bear. It looked at me with it's evil eyes and it had it's nose curled up, showing off it's powerful jaws and teeth. It let off a roar that made me shiver continuously. Frightened, I realized I'd left my 30-30 rifle back at the creek so I began to run back to get it. I remembered one of my brothers had a gun as well, so I stopped, but when I turned I could see the outraged bear was charging toward me. It shook the ground as it ran and my heart thumped to the beat of its steps. Puzzled about what to do, I looked around for a solution to the problem and discovered the fish I was holding I threw the fish at the bear, hoping it would eat them instead of me, but it didn't work. The bear kept charging. It was only feet away and closing. At this point I could feel the bear's hot breath on my face.

Shocking, a gunshot broke the stillness of the air and the bear halted. I looked down the path and I could see that my brother was standing there ready to shoot again. The bear was fiercely snarling at me wishing it had enough life to attack but instead, it flopped over on it's side and died.

After looking over the dead carcass, we discovered it had recently been shot by another hunter with a shot gun, which hadn't had the power to kill a bear, just hurt one very badly. This bear was suffering from the pain and it was out to kill anything it could catch in order to cure it's frustrations. I just about lost my life because of a foolish hunter.

SHH, QUIET, THERE'S A CARIBOU

Brendalynn
Trennert
Grade 12
Sir John Franklin
Yellowknife,
N.W.T.

This was on an early summer day when my brother, Spencer, and I decided to get a load of water. Well, we did get a load from the river near our home. Then we decided to go and pick some berries on the old highway road. We found our regular berry patch on the old road blooming with berries. So for about an hour and a half my brother and I picked berries.

Then we decided that we had better get back home. So back in the truck we started going down the road. All of a sudden we saw a caribou run across the road ahead of us. So from that moment on my brother and I were all excited about seeing this caribou. Right away my brother started to figure out ways to corner this caribou.

The first thing that was done was shutting off the truck. Then Spencer told me not to make any noise when we got out or it would scare the caribou far away. So, very carefully, I got out of the truck, trying so hard not to make any noise at all. Then I walked one way on the road and Spencer walked down the opposite way from me. We did this hoping to see the caribou standing in the bushes.

It seemed like it was an eternity before I saw the caribou. But I did. And yet I did not know how to tell my brother because he told me not to make any noise. So I stood on the road, looking at my brother. I was pointing to the bush yet, he did not understand me. Then I started to jump up and down, waving my arms, kicking my feet and pointing at the bushes. Finally, my brother realized what I was trying so hard to say without making a noise. So he walked slowly to where I was and he lifted his rifle, aimed and shot at the caribou. My brother was so scared he shot again and again. Finally, the caribou fell to the ground. I could tell that my brother was scared because every time he aimed and fired his eyes would close at the same time too. I knew he would have hit me if I told him that. So I kept it to myself. I followed my brother to the dead caribou. By the time we got by the caribou we were like jitter bugs. My brother quickly slit the caribou's throat to drain it's blood.

After that was done my brother and I drove our water truck home to get our pickup truck. When we did get home we told our parents. They couldn't believe that we got a caribou. So we told them we'd be back home in about two hours. Off we went to get our caribou. It took us a very long time to load the caribou on to our truck.

When we got back home it was getting late. Our parents came outside with shock written all over their faces. My brother and I had the biggest smiles on our faces when they took a picture of my brother and I with our caribou.

YUMOGA

Dwayne Barnaby
Grade 11
Sir John Franklin
Yellowknife

Yumoga lived in a time when there were no Europeans in North America yet. His place of living was the northern part of North America where the big river runs by the treeline. The spiritual world of Indian medicine and magic was believed and practised then. Things such as sickness, diseases and poverty didn't exist at all. Survival was the thing you had to live with day by day. Survival was the thing that you brought to future generations. Your tribe depended on your survival and knowledge of medicine, and magic was the measure of how high the person was politically.

Yumoga was a guy who knew lots of medicine and magic. His average size body and keen mind helped him endure to such a level of physical and mental abilities. Like every place on the planet there were wars. Yumoga could remember the people he killed clearly, but he knew it was best to remember the real reason to kill others, and that was to protect his own life.

There were many wars. During the wars, a bunch of guys visited him in his teepee. They told him that they had some knives to trade. Yumoga suspiciously invited them in. The hunters or warriors showed him the display of knives on the moosehide, there was a dozen or more knives on the moosehide all spread out. He picked two and looked at them carefully. The warriors said the knives were sharp and of good quality.

Yumoga paused and thought, "An ambush." He pierced around with his wise eyes. He then jabbed the two closest men beside him and leaped from his spot where he was sitting, right through a little hole at the door where the flaps were. Yumoga was gone into the thick bush almost instantly, "Yumoga was gone." The warriors knew it was best to leave Yumoga and not follow him because Yumoga could easily out-do them when ready to fight.

Yumoga killed many other men with little effort; some were a problem. He beat them because he knew more medicine and magic. One day he met a man he had heard about, a man named Coneedee, meaning, "man without fire for one month". He battled with him right away. The two men were so close in medicine and magic they couldn't beat each other. Their arrows hit each other tip to tip. It was a hopeless, winless fight. Soon Coneedee went his own way, so did Yumoga.

They met later on again, but still they couldn't beat each other. As time passed on Yumoga learned that killing his enemies was not always possible or even necessary. His age and wisdom told him to move away from the wars, out of the action and to a new, less violent place. But still, wherever he went or lived, survival was always the bottom line.

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I GOT UP ONE MORNING

Stuart Britton
Grade 7
William
MacDonald
Yellowknife

I got up one morning and looked out the window. "Aha!" I said to myself, "what a perfect day for snowmobiling!" So right after breakfast I set off for a day trip.

After snowmobiling for a couple hours I decided to stop for a snack. As I started to unpack some food, I fell over. That's all I remembered. I had this big pain in my head.

Later on I felt well enough to head back to Iqaluit, so I packed up my stuff. Just then I spotted an igloo! I decided to go visit it, so I sharply turned my snowmobile and headed toward it.

I then noticed that there was a dogteam tied up beside the igloo. I did not find this unusual because several people still like to use dog teams. As I came closer to the igloo, I noticed that the qomatik was made out of fish instead of wood.

When I entered the igloo I saw about seven people huddled together, as if they were frightened. When I greeted them, I heard no answer. So I tried again but this time was greeted back.

As I looked around I found that there were no lights. Lighting the igloo was a qulliq; a stone dish with whale oil in it.

"Hi, I am Stuart," I said.

"I am Joetanie," he replied. "This is my family."

"Hello," I said to the other people, but there was no answer.

"They don't speak English," Joetanie said. "I learned English from whale hunters."

"I thought whale hunting was illegal!" I said.

"Huh? Whale hunters come in big sailing boats."

I noticed that there was no rifles, but harpoons. All seven people wore caribou clothes, no fabric clothes!

Then I realized, whale hunter's in sail boats? Harpoons? Fur clothes? I must have been sent back in time.

To confirm this remarkable thought I decided to ask the Inuit what year it was. They looked at me blankly. How could I find out?

I ran out of the igloo, followed by three of the Inuit. I started my snowmobile and all three of the Inuit ran back into the igloo. A couple of seconds later they came back out with their harpoons. They were motioning to me to get out of the way. Quickly I shut the snowmobile off. I explained to them it was a machine. I took everything off my sled and told them to get on. I started my snowmobile again and drove towards Iqaluit.

When I reached where Iqaluit should be there was only snow and rocks. Nothing else! I started to head back to the igloo when my head started pounding.

Then I woke up in a cold sweat in my bed. My bed! In Iqaluit!

I looked out the window, "Aha!" I said to myself, "What a good day for a snowmobiling trip!"

CAUGHT IN A TRAP

Alison Dexter
Grade 7
J.B. Tyrell
Fort Smith

Hey there, I'm an Irish Terrier named Max. I live in the N.W.T. My owners are really nice, but the youngest boy always pulls my tail. There's the dad of the family named Frank. He always takes me running or skiing. Their mom's name is Elizabeth and she always ends up feeding me. Once in a while she'll brush me. They have three kids. Graham is twelve, Fiona is ten and Colin is three. Graham wrestles and plays around with me. Fiona cuddles me and Colin is the one who pulls my tail.

One fine wintry day in November Frank took me skiing. I was very excited! The snow was glistening brightly and the air had the smell of pine trees. I was in the mood for running! With a surge of speed I raced off along the trails. Frank would catch up sooner or later. When Frank did catch up to me, we'd already gone half way. After a couple minutes I trotted off into the trees to go to the bathroom.

CRUNCH!

I yelped like I'd never yelped before! I was in total agony. It was like someone had taken a ten pound brick and dropped it on my paw. Then the beautiful smell of pine trees vanished and all I could smell was my own blood! I gulped, then forced myself to look down. I felt sick! I hated the sight of my own blood and there was enough of it there to make me feel queezy! I also saw that I'd stepped into a fox trap. It was clamped around my foot and I didn't know how I'd get out of it! I could faintly hear Frank's worried voice call my name. I tried to bark but nothing would come out. Frank's voice slowly faded until I could hear it no more. Oh, what I'd give for a juicy meaty bone and my warm, soft bed!

"Enough of this cowardliness!" I thought, "I can get away!"

Lucky enough for me it was a cheaper trap and was attached with a rope instead of a chain. Well, I tried to put the pain out of my mind and started to gnaw on the rope. After about an hour I stopped. My paws were frozen and my body was shaking from cold. I just had a few threads left to gnaw through but my mouth was too sore to work.

With one final heave I managed to break the rope free. Very slowly and painfully I made my way home with the trap weighing me down at every step. How long it took me I don't know, but it took my last ounce of strength to make it up the stairs to the door.

Frank must have heard the clank of the trap as I came up the stairs for it wasn't long before the door opened and I was swept up into his arms.

He removed the trap, bathed my wounds and miraculously there were no bones broken. In a few days I would be running again.

THE RAVEN WHO SAVED PEOPLE

Erin Ulrich
Grade 5
N.J. Macpherson
Yellowknife

Many years ago, there lived a Yellowknife man called Kimosee. This story involved Kimosee and one of his friends named Robert on a hunting trip to Rankin Inlet.

Kimosee and Robert got to Rankin one night and they decided to start their hunting the very next morning. In the morning they got all of their hunting gear and went to rent some snowmobiles.

They got onto a lake and although neither Kimosee nor Robert noticed it, there was a big crack in the ice. Kimosee and Robert went over it at the same time so they put a lot of weight on it. They both fell in and couldn't get out! Luckily there was a strange raven near by. It flew up to them and started to peck on Kimosee's clothes. Kimosee looked up, saw the raven and yelled, "STOP THAT!" The raven didn't stop, Kimosee was being lifted out! When he got half way out the raven stopped and Kimosee climbed the rest of the way. Then he tried to pull Robert out but he fell back into the water again. He was getting very tired and he didn't think he could swim any longer. Kimosee's arms were getting very tired too. Robert started to sink so Kimosee pleaded, "Raven, raven can you please come back?" Just as Robert was sinking under the water, the raven came. He pulled Robert out of the water and left again.

Kimosee and Robert were wet and so were their snowmobiles. They soon discovered that their snowmobiles would not run. They couldn't get back into Rankin to get dry clothes or new snowmobiles. Kimosee called, "Raven, raven, can you please help us get our snowmobiles back into Rankin?" The raven came with a few of his friends. They all started to lift up on the snowmobiles and soon brought them into Rankin. Kimosee and Robert walked back. With dry clothes and new snowmobiles they started again on their trip.

Finally they found a herd of caribou and started shooting. They killed a young one and its mother started to charge them. They were very scared so they started to run, but the mother was gaining on them. Kimosee yelled, "Raven, raven can you please come quickly and help us?" With the mother on their heels the raven came and lifted Kimosee and Robert safely away. After the mother left the raven let them down again.

Soon they were very tired and wanted to go back to Rankin but their snowmobiles were low on gas. Again Kimosee called, "Raven, raven, can you please help us get back into Rankin?" And again the raven and his friends rescued them. Their adventure over, they went back to Yellowknife. When they told their friends about their trip nobody believed it, but they will never really know!

KIWOKA LEARNS A LESSON

Terri-Ann Bugg
Grade 6
Mildred Hall
Yellowknife

It was the beginning of spring in the Arctic and the birds were in the trees, and the icicles melted like butter under the rising morning sun.

Everything was cheerio except for an Inuit boy, about 11 years old, Kiwoka. He was always unsatisfied and wasn't happy about being isolated in the Arctic.

One day while Kiwoka and his father were hunting for seal in the ice, Kiwoka decided to hunt away from his father. As Kiwoka walked on the fresh ice he thought he heard muffled sounds coming from under his feet. Thinking it was the wind he ignored it and proceeded to make a snow block for the blowhole. Then, like a great gust of chimney smoke, a blue cloud of dust, incense and smoke rose from the blowhole and soon a figure appeared in the most beautiful seal parka with a matching turban Kiwoka had ever seen.

"My name is Kimotak, great genie of the North! How may I help you?" Stuttering in astonishment Kiwoka said, "M-m-my name is Kiwoka." "Well then? What would you like?" Regaining reality, Kiwoka remembered how miserable he was and said to Kimotak, "I would like to go to a place where there are lots of people." "Very well then." So with a blink of his eye, Kiwoka and his two dogs were whisked away to a place that the genie called Yellowknife.

Kiwoka was fascinated with the city and started to walk down the hard cement. As Kiwoka walked, people were stopping to stare. Then Kiwoka realized why. Everybody was wearing denim or cotton jackets while Kiwoka was wearing a heavy caribou skin parka, fit only for the high Arctic.

Then out of nowhere a Bylaw Division car came and stopped at Kiwoka's feet. "'Scuse me there sir," the officer said, "but those dogs there aren't licensed." "Licensed?" Kiwoka thought.

"I'm just going to have to take them away." Just as the officer was about to grab Kiwoka's dogs homemade collar, Kiwoka grabbed it first and started to run. Screaming frantically, "Kimotak! Help!" The officers were hot on Kiwoka's heels. Then in front of him stood Kimotak. In another puff of smoke Kiwoka was back beside the blowhole with his father kneeling down beside him.

Kiwoka was delirious and started to say, "I want to go home...home," over and over again. "Wake up! Wake up!" Kiwoka's father was shaking him and soon revived him. "You slipped and conked your head on the snow block. You must've been dreaming!" Kiwoka didn't care if that adventure was real or not, the important thing was that he learned a lesson; there really is no place quite like home.

I LIKE TO GO HUNTING

Michel Pierre
Grade 1
Princess
Alexadra
Hay River

I like to go hunting with my grandfather. He teaches me how to aim the gun and how to be careful. One time my grandfather took my littlest brother and I out to his old cabin. I shot a moose and my gradfather was proud.

ONCE THE SUN AND THE WIND

Megan Munro
Grade 1
N.J. Macpherson
Yellowknife

Once the sun and the wind wanted to have a race and the wind went first. The children didn't like the wind. Now it was the sun's turn. Everybody liked the sun, everybody cheered for the sun. The wind was very mad. The moon asked the sun, "Do you want to race me?" The sun said, "Yes." So the sun had another race. This time the moon went first. Nobody liked the moon. Now it was the sun's turn. Everybody liked the sun. The sun won the race. The moon was very mad. The rain asked the sun, "Do you want to race me?" The sun said, "Yes." The rain went first. Nobody liked the rain. Now it was the sun's turn. Everybody liked the sun.

A LONG TIME AGO

Jonathan Tsetso
Grade 2
Thomas Simpson
Fort Simpson

A long time ago moose didn't have antlers. Once a moose was taking a walk in the woods. A hunter saw the moose. Two sticks fell and landed on his head and for many, many years the sticks didn't come off. The sticks got old and they got crooked and the color turned grey and that's how the moose got antlers.

THE SMALL WONDER

Neda Toeg
Grade 6
Mildred Hall
Yellowknife

It was in the middle of winter and the snow was blowing hard against our house. I was living in Inuvik with my mom, dad and baby sister or brother that hadn't been born yet. My name is Juda and I am 11 years old.

I was sitting by the widow and thinking of the new sale of baby huskies just down the road from us. The baby huskies were selling for $50.00 and were selling fast. I had just earned enough money to buy one the next day and I couldn't wait. I still had butterflies in my stomach when I went to bed. I got up very early the next day and went looking for my dad. I found him in the kitchen. I told my dad that I wanted to go and get a puppy. As soon as we got to the house I rushed from the car to the door. Then I saw a man standing in front of me. It was the owner of the dog and puppies. I was looking for a smile to appear on his face, but it didn't happen. He showed my father and I in and pointed to the box the puppies were raised in. When I looked in, all I could find was a small runt. I felt sorry for it and said I wanted to buy it. The man looked at me in surprise and said, "I'll sell it to you for $35.00."

About six months later, my dog, Tundra, was almost fully grown but still small in size. One day I took him to the vet for his check-up. The veterinarian turned to me and said, "Tundra has a disease and won't live very long." I suddenly broke out in tears. I squeezed my dog tightly. Oh, no, I am starting to cry I thought. Then I thought about the champion dog sled race I had entered Tundra in the next day...

I kissed and hugged my dog one last time, then we got ready at the starting line, then I said to Tundra, "You can win it boy." The gun shot went off and the race began. We found ourselves in third place and then into first. The man behind us was the winner of the last year before. We were about two feet away from the finish line, suddenly Tundra collapsed. My heart skipped a beat as I fell to the ground too. I crawled over to my dog and gently picked Tundra up. The man who won before stopped all the other racers and told me to carry my dog over the finish line. After I buried the trophy with my dog I sat down beside it and started to cry. I will never forget my small wonder Tundra!

A DAY IN THE BUSH

Floyd Bertrand
Grade 9
Echo Dene
Fort Liard

One cool Fall morning I got up early and went outside to make a fire. It was cold and quiet, soon after I could hear the wild birds singing in the distance. Across the river I saw the sun rising and shining against the mountains. After making a fire outside I put the coffee on top of the fire to warm it up. After eating my breakfast and drinking my coffee I went out to go hiking.

I walked on the shore of the Liard River carrying my gun looking for any suspicious animals. I had reached a huge pile of driftwood so I climbed over it and I found myself in a dried out river. As I continued walking I turned a corner and came face to face with a grizzly bear. As fast as I could I took off my gun and took a shot at it so I could scare it. But the grizzly glared at me with anger and started to charge at me. After reloading my gun I took another shot but the bullets could not stop the grizzly so I ran towards the bank and threw myself down to pretend that I was dead, lying there quietly, not moving. I could hear the bear approaching me slowly. After a few minutes the bear walked around me as if he was waiting for me to get up, but I lay there not moving. After a while the bear walked right up to me and put his arm on my back, as if he was trying to turn me over. After an hour or so the grizzly left, walking slowly away.

I could see the bear going around the corner. I got up slowly and wanted to run but I couldn't because I might make too much noise running on gravel. Slowly and quietly I walked away. Soon after I reached the shore and continued to walk to my tent. When I reached the tent I got my things packed and left to go back home to Liard.

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COME SO SWIFT, GO SO SILENT

Jamie Aiyout
Atkin
Grade 12
Sir John Franklin
Yellowknife

Stella ran on ahead as usual and I hurried to catch up. After all, as her elder brother (by almost a year and a half), I felt a certain responsibility for her. It was the fall I turned 10, I was a decade old (or so my teacher told me and it sounded more impressive than just 10) and it was almost dinner time.

We passed the tracks on the edge of town and made our way down river to our home, our modest little trailer. Out of the corner of my eye I caught a flash of movement and then Stella and I were running to the river to get a look at the dark shape struggling mid-stream.

There, fighting against the current, was a large, grizzled dog. Apparently exhausted, it was swimming weakly towards the band. Quickly it disappeared around the West bend just before our house. I raced around the corner and came upon an old man pulling himself up the embankment. I helped him up and asked him if he had seen the dog. He looked at me closely for a moment taking in the holes in my sneakers and the patches on my coat. "I tried to reach for it," he said, which seemed strange to me for he seemed a very old man for such ventures, "but instead I fell in. Thank you for helping me young man."

"You're welcome, sir," I replied, being as polite as my mother had painstakingly taught me to be. Though he was obviously very tired and hungry from the look of him, he went to great pains to hold his bearing before me. By this time the not so fleet Stella had caught up and was shyly eyeing the old man. Noticing his poorly hidden shivering, I felt the only thing to do was to invite him in the house to warm up and perhaps get the rest of the story from him.

Father was at the door as came up the steps and he looked over our guest with curiosity as we breathlessly recounted what had happened. Father greeted the man and noting his obvious exhaustion, invited him in for some tea and bannock we would be glad to share.

The man gratefully agreed and we sat down to our supper and ate quietly. After dinner we all sat down in the living room together. Father had offered the old man a bed for the night after learning that he had no place to stay. It was Stella's bedtime and the old man announced he would tell us a story. We were happy at the prospect, remembering vaguely the tales grandfather would tell when he still lived.

"Long ago," the old man began, "there was a tribe who lived not far from here, whose little one were playing on the edge of the wood one day and found a young wolf almost dead from hunger. It's shoulder had been hurt in a fight with another male and he had not bee able to hunt. The children were not afraid and for weeks they secretly fed the wolf as it mended and one day it was no longer there. They were sad that they no longer could care for it but were happy it was well. Months later, when winter came, the game became scarce and the tribe began to hunger. One morning revealed a dead rabbit at the forest's edge. It was such for the weeks that came until the hunters began to find meat again. The elders, wise as always, believed the spirits of the rabbits had left them there, but the children knew it was their wolf."

For a while Stella and I lay in bed that night and talked about the dog in the river. Mightn't it have been a wolf like in the story? It was certainly more exciting to think so. I wished I could have helped it and I wondered at it's fate. Had it had the strength to make it to shore? I thought also about the old man. When I thought about it, he did not really look so old. His long hair was just beginning to gray and he had held himself like a younger man, despite his obvious weakness. It had been something about his eyes that had seemed older than anything or anyone I'd ever met. I went to sleep thinking about them.

At breakfast the next morning, the man was gone and I was disappointed at not being able to say goodbye. Father said he had left early, before even my father had gotten up. I was sad he had to go.

As I stepped out the door I saw the tracks from our doorstep to the horizon, down river away from town. They showed cleanly in the new fallen snow. I stared at them for some time and measured them with my glove. They were about the same size as my mittened hand and he seemed to favour one paw slightly.

Oh yes.

They were paw prints.

THE FIRST TIME I WENT DOWN TO THE RIVER

Pearl McLeod
Grade 12
Sir John Franklin
Yellowknife

The first time I went down the river was when I was about ten. I went with my grandparents, my aunt and my sister, Brenda.

My grandparents were going for a picnic and we decided to go. We brought our swim suits and our towels.

We all went down to the boat at the bank of the Mackenzie River and soon we were off. During our boat ride, we got to see how beautiful it was by boat. We saw where all the old summer camps were and stopped at some old camps where people used to camp.

We stopped on a couple of islands and looked around, on one of them we found a dead bear. We later left and found a nice place on land and had our picnic. We sat on the rocks with our towels under us.

My aunt, my sister and I went swimming in the river, but had to stay close to shore. My grandparents were afraid that we might get caught in the current.

After swimming around, we had some of my grandma's raisin bannock and some fish, which was delicious.

We left after eating and started heading to a place the people of Providence called "Horn River", a place where many families stayed during the summer.

When we arrived there, we saw kids swimming in the calm water and about six white tents.

I couldn't believe what I was seeing after we passed the camps. For the first time I saw lily pads on the water and it looked like the prairies, which was hard to believe in the bush.

We also saw old buildings and old equipment for the first time. It was beautiful, just like seeing it in a painting, but this was real.

The grass was long and the building was old. We walked inside the building and also in the tall grass.

After staying there for about an hour, we had to leave. We began heading back and this time we went another way. We stopped at a couple of cabins on the way. I noticed that they were small and we began heading back once again.

When we got back home we were tired, but we still went out to play since the day wasn't over.

Today, now eighteen, I have never gone back to that beautiful place. But I will always remember it.

My grandparents don't go out boating now much. But when they used to go out picnicking we would be there.

IN THE BUSH

Melissa Jaud
Grade 1
Mildred Hall
Yellowknife

One day I went into the forest. We saw a water fall. My brother almost fell down because he crawled in front of the bar and he didn't hold on. My dad grabbed onto him and then we went home. I took my dog with me and he caught a rabbit because he is a hunting dog. He got fleas from the rabbit.

PINE POINT MEMORIES

Jackie Hemphill
Grade 2
Galena School
Pine Point

I will miss the purple dome swimming pool in Pine Point. I learned to swim there. I will go swimming at the beach in Nova Scotia. I won't miss the snow. My best day I remember in Pine Point was when I went to pick raspberries and the bees came and I was stung but my mom made some nice raspberry jam.

WHEN I TALK TO MY GRANDMA

Mark Henry
Grade 4
St. Joseph's
Yellowknife

My grandma came north June 10th, 1944. She came by plane from Vancouver, B.C. All the houses were small and they were shacks or log cabins. Supplies came by airplane or, in winter, by cut train over the ice. There were no roads, only paths. Not very many people lived here. It was important to live by the water because there was no water truck. My mother was born March 21, 1945 at the old Con Mine Hospital which had been built for the workers. Grandma walked through snow up to her waist in a big blizzard. She was in hospital for nine days. When my mother was born she and Grandma came home by dog team taxi on Easter Sunday. My mother went to the first public school up town.

The family lived in a four room shack in School Draw. It was called School Draw because the people built their houses between the big rocks for shelter and being close to the water. Also, those people worked at the Negus Mine and the Con Mine. People used canoes to go shopping and dog team in the winter or carried a pack sack on their back. The nicest part of the winter was skating on the big lake and the Christmas Concert. It was held in the Legion Hall in Old Town, while waiting for Santa to arrive by plane, then by dog team, with a bag full of presents to give a present to each child. Then everyone walked home happy.

STOP!

Natalie Marach
Grade 4
J.H. Sissons
Yellowknife

Last Christmas Day eve I went for an exciting Komatik ride on Great Slave Lake with my dad, my 10 year old sister Catherine, my 6 year old brother Nicholas, my 3 year old sister Alexis, a girl named Caitlin who was 5 and her dad, Mr. Cleveland. Also, our family dog, Sandy came. My dad and my brother were on the skidoo pulling the komatik. Mr. Cleveland was on the back of the komatik and we girls were in the komatik bundled up under sleeping bags so we wouldn't get cold. We were driving along very peacefully.

Caitlin and Alexis were sleeping, Catherine was nearly asleep and I was just sitting there looking up at the northern lights and all the stars and Mr. Cleveland was helping to steer by leaning from side to side and Sandy was still running beside us.

It was not really very cold out but with the wind blowing on our faces it made it feel cold.

Suddenly it started going fast! Nicholas probably asked my dad to go faster, but going fast made us bump up and down.

For the first little while we were okay and enjoyed it. But in a while we started going at a terrific speed. Suddenly, we went over a sharp bump. The komatik got knocked over!

My dad didn't know it go knocked over, so he kept on driving!

I started yelling and laughing at the same time because I wasn't hurt and it looked funny to see everyone jumping around.

Catherine started yelling too because she had hit her head and was being dragged along the ice beside the komatik. Caitlin was STILL sleeping! Alexis woke up and started to cry because she was scared and Mr. Cleveland was somehow still holding on to the komatik.

Our dad stopped when he heard all the commotion. He and Mr. Cleveland lifted the komatik back up. There was no damage done to anyone or anything but Sandy thought there was so he kept on running around in circles with a worried look on his face.

Then we went home and told our moms all about it while we ate our dessert and while the adults had their tea.

* A komatik is like a dog sled but a lot bigger and a ski-doo is supposed to pull it.

IN 1960, PINE POINT WAS A FOREST

Amanda Wells
Grade 5
Galena Heights
Pine Point

In 1960, Pine Point was a forest. In 1961, Pine Point opened. They started building houses, schools, stores and making playgrounds. In 1985-86 there were more stores then any time. In 1987, the stores closed one by one. June, 1987 the mine closed down. In 1988 all the stores were closed down except for one. Now even houses are getting moved.

In am going to move in May. Some of my friends have moved last year in 1987.

Soon Pine Point will be a forest once again.

WEST CHANNEL FLOOD '85

Andrea
Courtoreille
Grade 8
Diamond Jenness
Hay River

I hopped out of my bed and looked out the window. Water was rushing over the road. I ran into the living room to wake up my brother. We looked out the window and the water was rising quickly. We all ran outside. My dad let our dog loose. A friend of my parents and our aunt and uncle were staying over. My dad's friend hopped in the cold water to shut off our propane. He got caught up in the current. My uncle caught him before he could be carried away. We all climbed on the roof. We looked around at everything. Boats, bombardiers, shacks, tanks and other things were either floating around or else caught in the trees. We saw our neighbours across the road climbing onto their roof too. We had to wait for a while. Then a canoe came, and we all got in. We were finally getting closer to where they waited for us with a bus. We had to get into a police truck and a tractor pulled us. One vehicle was sitting on the road filled with water. The bus took us to the new town. We got a room in a motel for the night. The next day we went to stay with some of our relatives.

The day finally came when we could go back to the West Channel and get some belongings. The roads were muddy. Our neighbour's silver shack was in our yard. A bombardier was way back in the bush. A house was just about in the middle of the road. Nets and floats were lying all over our yard. One car was sitting on an iceberg in another yard. Our picnic table was way back in the bush. It still is!

METIS AND DENE HISTORY

Trina Lafferty
Grade 8
Diamond Jenness
Hay River

Long ago the explorers came to the North and settled down. They married the Dene ladies who tanned hides and made clothing for their family. That is how some of us became Metis or "mixed blood between". People used to live differently from today. They lived in the bush and trapped for several months. They would sell their furs to the Hudson Bay Company. The Mackenzie River is well known by the old timers today. Children were raised in the bush by parents or grandparents and were taught the traditional lifestyles. Later they were sent to Fort Providence or Fort Simpson for school. There the school was run by the Grey Nuns and priests.

Every summer the boat would go from Fort Smith to Inuvik, stopping in little communities to drop off supplies. The boat was owned by Johnny Berens. My Uncle Jonas Lafferty Sr. was the captain of the boat. Today, there are about two boats named after Johnny Berens, one in Fort Providence, one in Fort Simpson.

On common illness in those days was tuberculosis. It used to take years to be healed. Some survived, some did not. Often those who got it would be very young, others were adults.

Today, as you ride along the Mackenzie River with a boat, you can notice little cabins still standing from a long time ago. The cabins that remain standing are there because the old timers back then knew how to build a good, solid, sturdy cabin. The cabin was built of big logs that were cut down with just an axe, which took hard work, not like today where you have the use of powertools to make the job easier and fast. My grandfather still has a cabin along the Mackenzie River about fifty to seventy kilometres up the River from Fort Simpson. As you look over the river from Fort Simpson you can see about 4 - 5 cabins across the river.

Today there are still cutlines that people trapped on. We should be the ones who make use of them. The furs today cost lots. Back then the money they got meant a lot to them, in amount. You could have gotten lots for $1.00. Today you can't get that much for that amount. Trapping was the only way you could make money to keep a family surviving, even hunting was another way of surviving.

I talked with several elders. They said that the old days were very hard. You had to pack water on your back, chop wood and walk a long way to set traps.

We young people should take time to carry on. Tea dances and drum dances are the songs sang by our ancestors, who are Dene. The dances that carry on today are prayers for the lost ones. They also pray to God, as they dance around the fire. There are still a few elders around today that are surviving from their own tradition. What they have learned from their parents and grandparents. Some elders can still read and write in our language. Slavey is our language, along with Dogrib and Chipewyan which are also northern languages. I have not been raised in the bush but my grandparents raised me, which their parent raised them in the bush for a short period of time. Even if I haven't been raised in the bush, these have been opportunities to know what it was like and experience the feeling of those days.

CAMPING UP THE RIVER

Val Francis
Grade 11
Sir John Franklin
Yellowknife

When I was 8, my family and I spent our summer of three months in our camp up the river from our home town of Fort McPherson. Though it was a long time ago, I can still vaguely remember it.

My two older brothers and sisters especially loved this time, as during the winter and the months leading up to June we all went to school in town.

It would take us around 3 1/2 hours, or sometimes longer if we stopped for lunch to get up there by boat. To this day, there are still no highways to drive up there by truck.

Our boat would be loaded down with our clothes, tent and some store bought items like matches, tea, sugar, salt, flour for bannock and some candles for when it would start to get dark at night.

We didn't need any meat as my dad and two brothers, Doug and Cliff, hunted moose and we had plenty of fish which was caught in the nets set about ten minutes away from our camp; rabbits we caught in the snares we set; and berries, mainly blueberries and some cranberries which were plentiful where we camped.

During that summer, the weather was beautiful. It was a bit cool since there were millions of trees around to shade us from the hot sun. I think it's only flaw was the number of mosquitos and flies about.

Where we camped, our tent would be set up next to the outhouse my father had built years earlier as his family had also stayed there. We were also quite close to the smokehouse where my mother and two sisters, Emily and Karen, made dry fish and dry meat.

That summer we swam a lot in the small lake about 10 minutes from our camp, as there was not much to do since the only people we were in contact with were our own family members as no other families camped near us.

Karen and I were the youngest and, not having as many chores to do, were able to play in a log cabin right across from the lake where we swam.

All around us there was thick bush and it was really nice because if you went for walks you would be kept cool. On days really nice my mom and dad would finish all the chores and we would go on a picnic.

In the afternoon, after everything was done, we would fill a pack sack with dry meat, tea, a bit of sugar and some whitefish wrapped in foil paper and cooked in the fire, turning it every so often. Cooking it this way was the fastest and most delicious way.

Being so young, I would usually sleep for about an hour while my family picked berries or just walked around close by. After I woke up, we would usually walk back.

The incident I most clearly remember was later that summer, late in the afternoon. Karen and I, having nothing to do, decided to make mud pies, something that I really enjoyed doing at that age.

I remember being really bored and being really mischievous. I threw a mud pie at Karen that hit her on the chin and caught her totally by surprise, as I usually never did things like that.

This started a huge mud pie fight that lasted ten minutes with neither of us letting up before our mom called us up for supper. This being the first time we had ever done something like that, we were both afraid of what she would do.

We slowly made our way up to the camp, with me behind Karen and faced her. Thinking back on it now, she wanted to get really angry at us as she had already worked hard enough, but after looking at us for a minute she started smiling and ended up laughing about it.

This was the last time I was ever up there, but it will be a time I will never forget, even when I'm ninety or so years old.

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I LIVE IN THE N.W.T.

Nicole Marie
Redvers
Grade 1
Princess
Alexandra
Hay River

I live in the N.W.T. and it is nice up here. My grandmother teaches me how to do moose, ptarmigan, fish and rabbits. When she shows me how to do it I watch her and learn how to do it better. When my daddy brings a moose home I always watch them skin the moose and cut it up. Then we cut it up into thin slices and we hang it up on a round piece of wood, and then we have dry meat. We are very lucky to live in th N.W.T. because we have moose and caribou in our freezer and sometimes we have ducks.

THE SUMMER IN MOUNT COTY

Swaneige
Bertrand
Grade 3
Acho Dene
Fort Liard

I go to the tower every summer. My dad has to look for fires there. I get there by helicopter. Me and my sister sometimes go camping, play in the mud, make a club house, collect rocks, make things with wood, pick blueberries and lots more. It's really scary when it's raining. We can't touch anything because we would get a shock. Once my mom had a shock and she was really, really scared. Sometimes people visit us at the tower. This summer I taught my sister how to read a little and count to ten. We have a little trail in the back. We go there a lot. There are lots of blueberries there. My sister Nahka found a bird's nest. I was going to take it with me but I forgot it. When it's time to go to bed my mom puts cream on my sisters because they get so many bites. Then when the summer is over we go on the helicopter again and come down from the tower and go home.

SPRIT

Anne Cadieux
Grade 7
D.J.S.S.
Hay River

The mist was rising of the lake when the three boys awoke. Chaal, Chris and Donny were staying at a camp called Quyta Lake about thirty-five miles out of Yellowknife.

It was a warm summer morning and the boys decided to go for a swim before breakfast. After they went swimming and had breakfast they thought it would be nice to go for a canoe ride to the old abandoned mine called Discovery. The mine was only about five miles from the camp.

After packing the canoe and making sure they had enough supplies for a couple of days they set off. When they reached the mine they saw an old house that was once used by the mine's owner. They went inside to see if they would be able to stay for the night. They found that it was still completely furnished; it even had a propane stove, and Donny was surprised that it still worked. So now they could stay in a warm house and cook on a stove. After they had something to eat they wanted to go exploring before it got dark. They took along some food, in case they got hungry, a couple of sleeping bags and some other equipment.

When they stopped to rest, Chris asked, "Are there any people still at the mine?" Chaal said, "No, there isn't anyone left because after the mine shut down everyone just packed what they could carry and left." Donny asked, "Chaal, is it true that there is a treasure buried near the mine, like in the legend?" Chaal said, "If there is, no one ever found it because it is supposed to be guarded by a naught-gunny, or a dead sprit."

"A sprit?" Donny asked, "What's that?" Chaal looked very serious and without cracking a smile said, "A sprit is a cross between a blind spirit and a deaf sprite."

"Huh?" both Chris and Donny said.

"Yeah" laughed Chaal, "it's a sprit because it lost its "I's" and "E's". Ha! Ha! Get it?"

All three boys started laughing uncontrollably, when all of a sudden they heard a twig crack under someone's foot or paw. They stopped laughing and turned to where the sound had come from. It was still light out so they could see a fair ways. When they did not see anything they thought it was just a small animal like a rabbit or squirrel.

Donny asked, "Could it have been the sprit? Maybe we are close to the treasure or something." Chaal said, "No, I don't think so. It was probably just an animal." Chris said, "Do you think we should go back now? It is getting dark." So they started back to the mine.

When they reached the mine, they found that the front door was open and there was some stuff scattered around the house. Donny asked, "We locked the door, didn't we?" Chaal replied, "Yes we did, I'm sure of it." "Let's clean up and go to bed," said Chris.

The next morning they awoke with a start. Chaal, Chris and Donny leaped out of bed and went to see what had caused the noise. They found that they had left one of the shotguns out and a racoon was playing around with it and the gun went off. Chris said, "What a wake up call!" The other boys laughed.

After they had breakfast, they went out exploring again. They went a different direction from which they had taken last time.

After walking for about twenty minutes they stopped and ate lunch. Before they started walking again, Donny kicked a rock and it moved revealing a metal box about one foot by one foot. They lifted it out and opened it. Inside were jewels, gold pieces, gems and a letter which read, "Dear Finder, these few pieces of treasure now belong to you." the letter was dated 1879, almost a hundred and twenty years ago.

The boys put the box into the pack sack and went back to the house and packed all their stuff. They went back to Quyta and then went to Yellowknife and told everyone of their adventure.

MY BEAUTIFUL AURORA

Michael Dyke
Grade 9
D.J.S.S.
Hay River

One evening in the midst of November I saw my beautiful aurora dancing and swaying in the moonlit sky, she flowed and soared over me with an inexplicable magic.

I laid down on my sled while the dogs howled in an eerie and desolate way. I watched as she swiftly lit up the starry sky and she just as quickly faded away.

She was gone, so I thought, and in an instant she swooped me up and carried me high into the heavens. What a ghostly feeling, it was like sailing on a completely still lake drifting so easily, it was almost hypnotizing.

Her soft, white light reminded me of freshly fallen snow. My eyes glittered and I felt extremely light. Spirits wildly flew past us, some beautiful and enchanting, others foul and evil.

I thought to myself for a while and came to the conclusion that I was dreaming or I was dead. I was calm and I seemed completely numb. I dreamt the most magnificent dreams. I peered at the northern sky and realized my dream was not a dream, it was reality.

I tried to move and a misty light engulfed my body and my physical self plunged downward to the sled on the ice packed tundra and my spirit stayed aloft.

Aurora glided up to me and danced with such grace that I swayed and began to join in and we danced and frolicked until dawn broke the midnight sky and we faded into the no longer moon-lit heavens.

If one peers at the sky on those cold, crisp northern nights you may see Aurora and I waltzing in the illuminated gossamer of our stage.

THE RETURN

Pauline Vital
Grade 12
Sir John Franklin
Yellowknife

Brilliant colours danced in the heat of the afternoon. Summer days were always my favourite. The bush plane circled the small, isolated village which could only be reached by charter, ice road and mobile phone. The mountains were a beautiful sight and tears spilled with relief of being home again in the quiet wilderness. It has been four years, four years in which I cherished the memories of lazy summer days, spring mornings, sloping mountain sides and the serenity of it all. Knowing that I would soon be home again, I worked feverishly at getting good marks in high school. Every night I had lain awake just thinking of what the family had been doing that day. And every plane I hear flying overhead makes me ache to be home again.

The plane was now bouncing along on the only gravelled airstrip and I was able to step out onto the ground many had walked before. Panic grew as I tried to pull my feelings together before I made a scene. Everything was so hauntingly familiar, it was as if I had stepped through a time machine. I looked down the one dusty road that went through the village and saw the same faces of yesterday staring back. A few smiled hello, but others hung back as if I were a stranger. Of course my family came forward and were happy to see me but the younger ones had to be coaxed a bit before they shyly gave me a quick hug. I looked around and realized that I had changed, not the others, as I had thought. People still went to the airport to find out for themselves who had come in on the plane and to observe the goings-on. They also still have racks over their outdoor fire places on which strips of moose-meat were hung to be smoked and made into dry meat. There were still no modern facilities and log houses were still being built. The school which was built in 1985 was still gleaming, slick from the oil which had been painted on in an attempt to prolong log decay. And the tourists, as I found out as the summer wore on, still took the dangerous risk of canoeing the rough rapids of the River.

I walked over to the picnic area and gazed thoughtfully at the mountain which stood on guard across from the village and I realized that it would be okay to stay for a visit, however, if I were to stay forever I would soon be restless and come to dislike the position I was in. I had seen too much of the outside world to come back to stay. I wanted to travel far, and eventually live in the city but I also want my future children to grow up in the environment I did. I dreaded telling my parents about how I felt for fear that they wouldn't understand since they have never been far from home. Instead, I wrote in an application for a secretarial position in the nearest town. That town will have to do for now, until I can afford to move to the bustling city.

Despite the move I will always be, at heart, the girl that went everywhere with her grandparents, to get birch bark, check the trapline, haul wood, berry picking.

MOST DEAREST DIARY,

Bill S. Preston
Esquire
Steve Hagen
Grade 11
Sir John Franklin
Yellowknife

Hey most awesome diary dude, today I'm going to tell you about my most excellent northern adventure.

It all started when Ted came zipping over in his totally bodacious, extremely high output, super powered SRV, complete with slick sliding sled. He then came into my room and told me that we were going to go out caribou hunting. All I could say was, "Excellent!"

We then got all our hunting gear and stuff loaded up into the sled and set off on an awesome adventure which I like to call: The hunt of the little furry dudes with totally vicious antlers extending from their warped shaped heads like demented, bent up spears.

After about three hours of skidooing through treacherous, unexplored-before-by-any-other-human-beings-on-earth type of terrain, we finally venture upon a herd of these distinctive, wild creatures with the totally tubular looking antlers.

We then stopped and turned off the reckless snow machine so we wouldn't scare them away and pulled out the binocks for a closer look. The sight was beyond belief, there must have been at least sixty-nine caribou out there. Ted just looked at me and we both said, "Excellent!" Ted then re-started the snow machine. I pulled out the rifle and moved forward slowly to get closer.

The herd began to shuffle around uneasily as they saw us creeping up on them. They suddenly all started running away from us. We yelled out our war cries and raced towards them with incredible speed. The speed was so psychedelic as I felt my head almost implode inside my helmet. We closed in closer and closer, finally we were side by side to the herd and now in shooting range. The pressure was intense! Since I wasn't driving, I got the gun ready and aimed. It was going to be a drastic shot because we were bouncing all over the snowy caribou turf. I told Ted to stop so I could aim better, shooting from the skidoo was unrealistic. He quickly pulled on the brake and we came to a sliding halt. I quickly jumped off the skidoo and aimed.

The aim was perfect, locked on, no doubt, I got my ears ready for the extreme blast of the rifle. Steadily I pulled the trigger....there was no sound, maybe it was so loud that I totally blew out my ears. Bogus! I then heard Ted freaking out, "Shoot! Shoot Dude!" I pulled the trigger again. It was at this time that I realized I had forgotten the bullets. "Bitchin!" I yelled, "I forgot the bullets dude!" Ted was pretty fumed but then he just went hysterical with laughter. "Wow, what a bummer, hey dude," was all he said. It was a most excellent adventure.

WHEN I WAS AT SPRING CAMP

James T'Seleie
Grade 1
Mildred Hall
Yellowknife

When I was at spring camp at Hume River I went hunting beaver with my Dad. I got attacked by wolves!

We drove to a little lake on a skidoo. I was standing on the shore. Dad was on the ice. I was looking around and I saw two wolves.

I yelled, "Daddy!"

Daddy came running. He pointed his gun at the wolves. But he didn't shoot because they were really Charlie Gully's dogs.

We went back to camp. Everybody laughed when me and my dad told them the story.

THE HUNT FOR A NARWHAL

Angel Dickou
Grade 2
Mildred Hall
Yellowknife

One day I packed my bags and left because I was going to the North Pole. It's very cold there. I brought my flash light and a saw, then I took a plane to the North Pole but I took the wrong plane. So I asked the driver of the plane if this was the flight going to the North Pole. He said, "No, it isn't," so I got a parachute and jumped out of the plane and landed on my two feet. Then I had to walk all the way to the North Pole and it took me two weeks to get there. There are lots of polar bears in the Arctic. One early morning I arrived at the North Pole and I was so tired I got into my sleeping bag and fell asleep. The next day I woke up and I was very, very hungry so I decided to go ice fishing. I got my saw and tried to cut a hole but the ice was too hard so I had to starve. Then I got my skates but the ice was thin and it was too late, I fell in. I never drowned because I was still at the surface because I was on a narwhal's back. Suddenly she turned upside down and I fell off but I swam and grabbed the narwhal's tail and jumped back on her. She was huge and her skin was very slippery and cold so I had to hold on tight to her flipper. She dove out of the water and dove back again and she slapped her flukes up and down on the water and she got me all wet. This narwhal had a long tusk. Her head was black and she had white circles on her back and brown spots on her tummy. When it was time to, she took me to the surface and I jumped on the ice and had to go all the way across the ice and back home.

THE SURFING POLAR BEAR

Evan Coe
Grade 3
St. Patrick's
Yellowknife

Once there was a family of polar bears in the north and their family tradition was to surf. But the baby polar bear did not know that surfing was his family tradition. But when he was 20 years old his mother told him that his tradition was to surf. He did not know what to say! So day after day he tried to surf but he couldn't do it. One day he built a water shooter and he tried it out and it was perfect! So he got his mother to come out and see his stuff. She said it was amazing. He was the best surfer in him family now.

WINTER NORTH OF 60

Alison Marshall
Grade 7
William
MacDonald
Yellowknife

During the northern winter, I have noticed that there are two kinds of people. There are the practicals, who walk around under layers of clothing, bundled in parkas or long coats and wearing oversize boots. There are also those people who have not yet realized that it is -40. Don't you always wonder why the cool people never get cold?

The Inuit people up north are lucky. By some phenomenon their noses never get frostbitten, and they always seem immune to the cold! They fix the engines of their snowmobiles in frigid weather with their bare hands and hardly ever need a hat or scarf.

Well, I sure need a scarf and toque below -30! Most of us look like we're ready to travel to the north pole by foot with all the clothes we need to stay warm! To the question: "Do all these layers inhibit movement?", the answer is, "Yes!". Personally, I have to walk like a robot if I want to walk at all in the winter.

While most of we humans are trying to keep warm, our pets (canines in particular) are usually seen rolling around in the snow. No, it isn't fleas. They are ridding themselves of dryness in their fur. As for extra fur, they got rid of that all over various pieces of furniture!

Dub you node eber get rudny ib de winber? Mine does! We all seem to need ten times the amount of kleenex in the winter as we do during all the other seasons combined. The cause - that never-dying flu which goes around Yellowknife three or four times and still doesn't go away. Maybe a study should be done on this inescapable virus.

The dilemmas of our cold winter.....the cats that never go out, but instead stay inside and prowl the house all night and the doors that freeze shut and won't open without a fight are the pet peeves of northerners. There are the pools of water which lurk at night and form during the day to rot your windowsills, the ear and extremities which are frostbitten and, of course, the cars which won't start in the morning, no matter how long you plug them in.

Winter here can be harmful to our health. Many times I have slipped on a corner of ice in front of my friend's and landed on my fanny (this bruises the ego as well as backside).

Winter does have its bright side. There are many activities to participate in during the north's longest season. We spend our time playing hockey, figure skating, cross-country skiing, speed skating, and a variety of other sports and arts. If you aren't interested in working up a sweat, then you can always stay home and listen to the radio or watch T.V.

Even with all its problems, I'd never leave Y.K. in the winter! Maybe in the summer, but that's a different story...

THE DAY MY DAD SHOT A DEAD CARIBOU!

Samantha Bohnet
Grade 9
St. Patrick's
Yellowknife

We were in Norman Wells at the time and I was only three. Dad and his friend Ray went out hunting for caribou because it was the time of the year when the caribou go down south. Dad and Ray hadn't seen any caribou that day so far.

Two other guys, also Dad's friends, were out hunting caribou at the same time, but they killed a large buck. They slit the neck and put the head on the shoulder to let the caribou bleed. They knew it was too heavy to carry to the truck, so they went back to get the truck. They just left the dead buck laying in the field with it's head on it's shoulder and it still looked alive but just laying down and sleeping or something.

A few minutes after they left, my dad and Ray saw the buck laying in the grass. They ducked down and crawled closer. Just close enough to get a good shot. Dad shot it and it didn't move. As they started walking toward the buck, the men that killed the buck in the first place came back to get the buck. Dad and Ray ran up to the caribou to claim it, but they saw that the caribou was already dead. When Ray saw that Dad shot the caribou in the heart they sort of walked away because the heart is useless once it was shot. When Dad got back to town everyone knew about his shooting a dead caribou because the guy that originally shot the caribou was a major blabber mouth.

When I told my Dad I was writing about him, we had a guy staying with us. When Dad told him the story they both had a good laugh about how he killed a dead caribou.

WINTER WARFARE

Ken Dragon
Grade 10
Sir John Franklin
Yellowknife

I have been out, on this sunny winter day, for about half and hour. My hands started to ache and my toes burned from the cold weather. I was lying in a hole I had dug in the snow to help hide me from my pursuer. I am tired of running so I will wait here and when he walks by I'll take him by surprise.

All of a sudden I hear a noise, not too loud, but a noise. Something was moving in the snow. My heart started to race and a smile came across my face; now I had him. Jumping out of my hole I shot in the general direction from which the noise came. Damn, it was just a ptarmigan walking in the snow. After standing there for a while, gawking at the bird I decided to sit back down in my hole. All became quiet, too quiet. I sure hope he didn't see me.

A few minutes later someone started shooting at me, it was him. I knew if I stayed in this hole he would get me sooner or later so I began looking for better cover. Then I noticed some rocks to my let. I made a break for them. He started shooting as soon as I got out of my hole. I ignored the shots as they exploded around me. All I was concentrating on was making it to those rocks and I made it untouched. I caught my breath and began looking to see where he was hiding. He had stopped shooting so I thought he might be moving to a new position, but he hadn't. He was atop a nearby hill, dug in so well I could barely see him. I took a few shots at him, but missed every time. He was laughing now, mocking my marksmanship. I looked for another means of escape. All I could see was a cliff. I could still hear him laughing. I'll have to jump.

Unfortunately, the cliff was a little higher than I expected. Ooof! I hit the snow feet first and ended up to my chest in snow. Because of the heavy snow I couldn't move my arms or legs. I was trapped.

A few minutes later he came around the corner with a big grin on his face. He looked a lot taller from this position, which was the exact position he wanted me in, a helpless one. However, being the good sport he was he didn't take his time or make a long speech. He just aimed and fired. BANG! I saw stars for a moment, bright stars. If pulled my arm free and wiped the remaining snow off my face. Man, does he ever pack a hard snowball.

THE BIG ONE

Michael A.
Doyle
Grade 12
Sir John Franklin
Yellowknife

Do you know that I, Michael Doyle caught the biggest fish in the Northwest Territories and when I came into town from Prelude Lake and I was telling everybody that I caught the biggest Jack that they have ever seen, not one person dared to believe what I had told them.

Well, if you read this story, you will be the last to hear and after you have read this story, you can make your own judgement as to whether or not to believe me, but people, I ask you to trust me. Now tell me, would I lie to you? Why of course I couldn't.

You are probably saying you want more proof. Well, I shall tell you everything that happened from A - Z without telling one little white lie.

It was summer of '85, on a very hot Wednesday afternoon. I was at home just soaking in my own sweat. I was half asleep from boredom when the phone rang. On the other line were two of my friends wondering if I would like to go to the lake for some fishing and swimming. I told them that I would be ready in five minutes. When I hung up the phone I ran through out the house trying to get my act together. When the guys got to my house, I was ready to roll. We decided to go to Prelude Lake for some fun in the sun.

The drive didn't seem to take too long and before you knew it we had rented a boat and were on our way to some deserted area of the lake. We drove around for about half an hour and we found a nice looking area. There were three islands with the main land running along side it. The islands were about 200 yards from the main land.

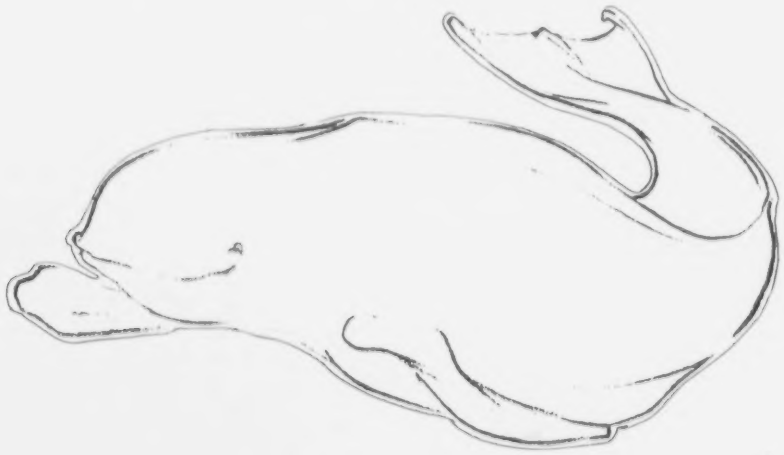
Pat Kennedy, who was driving the boat, suggested that we should try this area out. We all gave the area a try. After about 20 minutes, no one had even one bite. We were about to quit and go home but I suggested we go to the main land and have something to eat and to try some more fishing. The three of us sat down and started to talk about going into Grade eleven.

When we finished, we all tried for some more fish. So far we had none. Not long after this Pat caught a nice size jackfish. It looked like Pat was going to be the only one who would be catching fish for he had caught his second jack. After those two fish were caught, not one of us had anything.

We were about to head home when I threw one more line. As I brought my hook back I somehow caught my good friend Jack on the left earlobe. The hook was in his ear good and tight.

We had to drive back to Yellowknife to take Jack to the hospital. After they had removed the hook we went to my place. My father was home and he asked how was the fishing. I told him that I caught the biggest Jack that anyone would ever see.

Well, now you know my story. So it was not really a fish and it did not live in the water, but it is the biggest Jack caught, you must agree with me there. I still think you should believe me.



BETWEEN FACT AND FALLACY

Mae Jean Mah
Grade 11
Sir John Franklin
Yellowknife

I spent my spring break at the North Pole. Before you have me committed to a padded room, let me add that I was working at a top secret research station. All of the research is classified but I though you might like to hear some of the interesting facts that we discovered.

I was walking back to the station when I was stopped by a strange noise. Who or what was it? As I looked around, I realized that the noise sounded like crying. At first I didn't see anything but then I saw it - six feet of sobbing, white fluffy fur - the Abominable Snowman! Actually, it wasn't THE Abominable Snowman but rather a descendant. Either way, it was a living example of Snowmanus Abominablitus!

Ben, that was his name, was upset because this icicle has shattered when he dropped it. It had been a gift from a southern friend. In an effort to comfort Ben, I gave him the chocolate bar that was in my pocket.

Interesting fact number 1: Abominable snowmen love chocolate, they have shown a preference to good quality chocolate, but will eat any kind offered. When in doubt, Swiss is a good choice.

I invited Ben back to the research station but he declined and instead, invited me and my colleagues to his home. There we were introduced to his father. It was a single parent home.

The first thing we noticed about Ben's father was his small stature. He was only five feet, ten inches tall. A fully grown abominable snowman is, on average, seven feet tall.

One year, quite some time ago, Ben's father went to visit some southern relatives (you may know them as Big Feet, or Footus bigitus). Unfortunately, he did not know that it was summer and so the tragic mishap happened.

Interesting fact number 2: Abominable snowmen will melt in temperatures above the freezing point of water.

Ben's father began melting profusely when he arrived at his cousin's home, and had to be placed in a large freezer until it was cold enough for him to go home. He had come back to the Pole fourteen inches shorter.

That is all that I am permitted to disclose to you. However, if you wish to learn more about the abominable snowman, Ben and his father are currently writing a book that is to be published by Signet books. All proceeds from the sale of the book will be used for height restoration surgery for Ben's father.

WHEN I WENT TO THE NORTH POLE

Sophy
Kanageorgeous
Grade 1
Mildred Hall
Yellowknife

When I went to the North Pole it was very hot. "I can't believe it," I said. Santa Clause was in his shorts and his reindeer were swimming. So I took my unbrella and my towel and sunbathed in the sun. When I swam across the sea I came to Hawaii and instead of it being hot it was cold. A polar bear was being trained to skate. "I can't believe it," I said. I was turning in to an icicle. A polar bear poured hot chocolate on me and then I put on my jacket. Then a fairy came and made the polar bear fly me back home. My mom said, "Where have you been?" I said, "Oh, you won't believe me." "Come on." Then I told her. I was right. She didn't believe me.

THE STEGOSAURUS IN THE CLASSROOM

Jessica Barber
Grade 2
Princess
Alexandra
Hay River

There was a class called Mrs. White's grade two class. They were on a field trip and they found a stegosaurus! "Look!" Lisa shouted. Jessica looked and saw it too. "A stegosaurus!" she yelled. Jodi said, "Can we bring it to live in the classroom, please?" "Yes, please, please?" begged the class. "Yes," said Mrs. White. "Yah!" yelled the class. They brought it to the classroom. They got Mr. Grimm. "Oh my goodness!" shouted Mr. Grimm. They had a surprise assembly. They brought it to the gym. Everybody gasped. Mr. Grimm said, "We have decided to keep it in Mrs. White's classroom." Nobody asked what he was talking about.

They were dismissed with a lot of "wows!" Everybody in Mrs. White's class got to get on the stegosaurus and ride back to the classroom. Crystal said, "This is fun!" "It is!" Trina yelled back. Daniel said, "I'm scared, what if it steps on one of us!" "Scaredy cat!" yelled William. Becky said, "That's good reasoning, but I think it's nice."

They had fun, and they lived happily ever after.

Mrs. White's class was very excited about the coming of their new pet. The brought it out at recess and organized free rides for all the kids. All parents were called. They brought bundles of food for the stegosaurus and got rides on the stegosaurus. We taught it to jig and the people from Yellowknife called and asked to see what was going on because their lake was going slosh, slosh.

"Nothing," we answered, "we have a stegosaurus over here and it's jigging!"

When things calmed down I found Laurel, Joshua and my Mom and Dad. I told them what had happened. They were amazed.

THE HOT FLAMINGO

Rebecca Wong
Grade 2
N.J. Macpherson
Yellowknife

Once upon a time there was a flamingo who lived in a jungle. She was always hot. She thought that it was time for a vacation. She thought that the north pole would be cool enough. She bought some wool and made a thick shirt, sweater, coat and made some very long mukluks to cover her legs so she would be warm. She set off on her journey. On the way she met a big hungry fox! She knew just what to do. She said, "I think it's getting dark, you should go to bed Mr. Fox. It's getting cold too." Mr. Fox obeyed. So when he was heading home she ran on. Now that was close! She headed on. She met a bear. He was very hungry. She still had more plans and tricks. She said, "You look very tired and hungry. I'll get a chicken for you." Now the bear thought she was telling the truth. He lay down and waited. But in the mean time she had run away from the bear. That was another well done plan. Suddenly he heard a gun shot. That must be the hunter gang. Without losing any time she found a great hiding spot. They wandered past her hiding spot without seeing her. She saw a sign that had an arrow. It said North Pole this way. "Well!" she thought "I was going the right way." When she got way past the sign she found two humongous rocks and leaned them together so the looked like a tent but it was to protect her tent. She crawled inside. She took off her mukluks and shirt and sweater and wing warmers. She snuggled up in her very warm sleeping bag and fell to sleep. When she woke up she went for a walk. On the way she met some friendly polar bears with a toboggan. They offered her a ride and she had so much fun. When she went home she often thought about them while she was sweating in the jungle.

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THE CARIBOU WITH NO HOOVES

Richard Holtorf
Grade 4
J.B. Tyrrell
Fort Smith

Sammy is a nine year old caribou that likes to race. He is very strong and good at running. He likes to try different ways to make him run faster. Sammy has never lost a race so far.

Sammy lives fifty miles from Fort Smith. Sometimes he strolls into Fort Smith. Sometimes he has a race along highway 5 to Fort Smith. He really lives in Mountain Portage. When he had a race coming up he stays in his cabin. He would like to live in Wood National Park, but then he would have to give up his career.

Sammy's coach had called him into his house. He was telling Sammy that some of the world's greatest racers wore shoes. He was asking Sammy if he would wear shoes. Sammy said no at first. After about a half an hour his coach had finally conned him into wearing shoes. Sammy had a race the next day so he went to his beautiful cabin in Mountain Protage. The next day at 4 o'clock his race was going to begin. It was along Highway 5 leading to Fort Smith. When it was over Sammy had won by a long shot.

"I've won! With these shoes I can win anything," bellowed Sammy. He was gleaming with pride.

His coach asked, "Are you keeping these shoes or what?"

"Are you kidding? These shoes are fantastic!" exclaimed Sammy.

"So you're keeping them, Yahhoo!" yelled the coach jumping up and down happily. "I told you these shoes were perfect for you. You have a big race coming up in two days," continued the coach.

"These shoes are so comfortable!" exclaimed Sammy.

"Today is the day of the semi finals," said the coach. "I'm certainly goin to win the race with you running. I'll be famous."

The gun went off. Sammy's opponents were Sean, Chris and Larry. Sean started out with a huge lead, but when it was over Sammy had won the race. Joe, Sammy'coach was jumping up and down. "We're surely going to win!"

"I'm not sure," Sammy said solemly, "my feet are itchy."

"Well, take off your shoes and scratch them," said Joe impatiently.

"What if something goes wrong? asked Sammy.

"Just take them off!" yelled Joe, "What in the world could go wrong?"

"Well, for instance, I may damage my feet," whined Sammy sadly in a low voice.

"Oh, don't be stupid, screamed Joe angrily. "Caribou these days," he whispered to himself.

"Well, I guess I could," Sammy drawled.

"Good. It's settled," said Joe cheerfully. "I'll help you."

"No, that's quite alright. I can do it," Sammy said politely.

"Well, hurry up, we've got to race tomorrow," said the coach.

"Hold your horses," bellowed Sammy, "we've got all day. I want to wait."

"You take them off now or never," said Joe.

"Alright," said Sammy, as he kicked off all four shoes at the same time.

All of his hooves were gone! They were in his shoes! "You're fired!" yelled Sammy angrily.

"Calm down. Just give me one more chance. Tomorrow is your championship," Joe calmly said.

When it was over Sammy had lost his first race. "You're fired for good!" scramed Sammy.

"Oh gee, what a bummer. I spent four years of my life for this," Joe said madly.

"Not only that, but I will quit racing." Sammy said sadly.

"Now you're overreacting," Joe replied loudly.

"I'm playing football now," said Sammy.

After a few short weeks Sammy and Joe had gotten a football team together and had used crazy glue to glue Sammy's shoes back on.

RAPPIN' RAVEN

Joey Colbourne
Grade 5
N.J. Macpherson
Yellowknife

One day two kids were walking along the dump and they saw a nest. The two kids went over to the nest and saw a baby raven in the nest. This raven wasn't a ordinary raven. The two kids' names were Michael and Tasha. The baby raven was dancing to rap music. And boy was the raven dancing! He was flipping and spinning and everything you can think of! Michael wanted to take the raven home because he liked rap music too and he thought the raven was cute so he asked Tasha if she wanted to take the raven home. Tasha said, "Yeah." So they took the raven home and raised it. Then, when it was 41 years old they taught it to tap dance to rap music. Then Michael and Tasha became very famous. When the raven was 65 they named it the Fresh Prince. And they lived happily ever after.

THE MESSY BATHROOM

Tracy Waugh
Grade 6
Thomas Simpson
Fort Simpson

One day I came home from school and no one was home. My brother, Jake, was probably with his friends and my dad was working but I didn't know where my mom was (she doesn't usually work in the afternoon).

I was going upstairs to feed my cat, Rug, when I heard a noise coming from the bathroom. I ignored it because I thought it was our two dogs, Gizmo and Sprocket. I started to open a can of cat food and I heard another noise. I decided to check it out.

I walked to the bathroom and put my ear to the door. There were a bunch of splashing and grunting noises coming out of the bathroom. I started to get scared but I knew that eventually I would have to find out who or what was in there, so I opened the door, slowly.

You will never, never guess what was in our bathroom!

There was a polar bear sitting in our bathtub with the shower on, eating a bar of soap!!!

The bear did not look too happy that I was invading what he thought was his territory during his bath time or snack time or whatever it was.

I was terrified. I just stood there frozen solid from fright.

Then the bear polished off the soap, turned off the shower and waddled out of the house.

When I was finally able to move again, my mom came home and got mad at me for messing up the bathroom!!

A CHICKEN, A REAL, LIVE CHICKEN

Heidi Fordham
Grade 8
D.J.S.S.
Hay River

"Ah, come on True," Lindy coaxed. "You've just gotta come to the dance! I want you to meet that 'Dream Boy' I met the other day. You know, Wil North, that guy I told you about at school."

"But Lindy, you know I can't dance and I don't have a single outfit to wear!"

"I'll lend you something and I'll teach you how to dance. Laurie's going to be there too! Come on, please?!"

"There's no way you're going to teach me how to dance in two hours, as well as get me something to wear," True said halfheartedly. "No, I'm not going Lindy. And that's final."

"Oh, all right, if that's how you feel. I'll phone you in the morning and tell you all about it. Bye," Lindy said, hanging up.

"Well," True thought, plopping down on the couch, "I lose both ways. I could go and make a fool of myself or I could stay home and die of boredom."

Absentmindedly she flicked on the T.V. Turning the channel, she found an old black and white movie. I may as well watch it, she thought. I've got nothing else to do.

Two hours later, True dragged herself up the stairs to her room and into her bed. Finally, after what seemed like hours of tossing and turning, she fell into a fitful, dream-filled sleep...

True was on the phone with Lindy, discussing whether or not to got to the dance that night.

"I'm so chicken," True confessed. "I'm sure I'll do everything wrong."

"I'll help you," Lindy promised. "I'll tell you everything that you're supposed to do. Okay?"

"Oh, all right. But I'm telling you; I'm still chicken."

"Don't worry..." Lindy began. True laughed.

"I know, be happy!"

"Exactly," Lindy said. "See you later. Remember, 9:30. And if you're not there, I'm going to be very mad."

Later on that night, Lindy and Laurie were sitting on a table at the Hay River D.J.S.S. "Back-to-School" dance. All of a sudden, the rock band stopped playing. They were looking over at the main door and pointing excitedly. All the dancers had stopped and were talking and pointing too. The girls looked over toward the door where all the excitement was. To their amazement, there was a chicken, a real live chicken walking over to them! It came over to the table where Lindy and Laurie were sitting.

"Hi you guys," the chicken said in a voice that sounded strikingly familiar. "Would you mind giving me a lift?"

Trembling, Laurie helped the chicken onto the table and scooted back into her seat.

"Hey you guys, it's only your good friend True. Calm down!"

"You talk!" whispered Lindy hoarsely. "You actually talk!"

"Well of course I do!" the chicken replied. "I've always talked! Now, I better explain about my appearance. I told you I was chicken didn't I?"

"Yah," Laurie said, finding her voice, "but I didn't think you meant..."

"I know, neither did I," the chicken chuckled, "until I started sprouting feathers! Then I realized just how chicken I was."

All of a sudden Lindy and Laurie burst into laughter. The chicken looked at them strangely, then joined in. They were laughing and laughing, but they couldn't stop...

True shook herself awake from the crazy nightmare.

"What a dream!" she muttered, shivering.

Her mother's voice drifted up the stairs; "True, honey, the phone's for you."

Groggily, True lifted the receiver off the hook on the phone in her room. "Hello?" she said.

"Hey, True!" Lindy said excitedly, "You should have been at the dance last night! It was as riot! You know what happened? A chicken got loose from the chicken farm across the tracks and somehow got into the dance! It was so funny! True? True?!"

* Adapted from a dream by Tina Coats

THE WOES OF A NORTHERN PAPERBOY

John Harrison
Grade 9
D.J.S.S.
Hay River

There is no way of making a living in the North as dangerous and hazardous as being a paperboy in the Northwest Territories.

There are days when you don't feel like leaving the comfort of your warm home. Days like when it is 35 below and the snow is driven angrily by the wind. Just picture me slugging it out with a loaded Journal bag, the strap cutting into my shoulder through my thick winter jacket. This sort of weather usually results in frozen toes and fingers, and frost bitten cheeks.

In the spring, my unpaved crescent turns into a morass of mud. There are areas where the water accumulated to form an impassable water trap. These traps ensure that you will emerge from them soaked and muddy. The mud sometimes gets so bad that you end up pushing your bike more than you ride it. The rain in the spring time does not help matters any. It rains quite a lot and this usually results in soggy papers and irate customers.

Almost every family in the North has a dog. It seems that there is an unwritten law among dogs that all small dogs must hate paperboys. Because of this law, I have had perfectly good pairs of shoes and pants ruined by the little maulers.

As the result of the great distance the papers have to get from Edmonton to Hay River, they often do not arrive. A shout of joy goes up a soon as you hear the wonderful news. This joy is short-lived as you realize that you have to deliver double or sometimes even triple sets of papers. The absolute worst part about delivering papers is collecting. It is surprising to see how may people would spend the time to root through their houses for the correct change rather than tip a paperboy 50 cents. On the other hand, there are a few generous people who do not mind in the least giving a sizable tip.

Quite frankly, I don't think that the pay is any where near equal to the work and hazards of a Northern paperboy.

CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

Antje Nolting
Grade 11
Sir John Franklin
Yellowknife

The day is January 16th and the time is 11:49 A.M. My name is Ricky Schwartz and my partner's name is Tim. We are dressed in our combat uniforms, the basic skidoo pants, earmuffs, scarfs and mitts. The snow is at it's ripest stage, just perfect for the situation.

I'm not sure where my partner is at this moment but I can sense that he is close.

It's quiet, much too quiet. Fear fills my body while I stand there stiff as a board, still as a mouse. You know that feeling you get when you know that something is going to happen, but you're just not sure when.

My mitts are dripping wet from the snowball I've been holding for what seems like an eternity. I shift if from hand to hand, in anticipation. Where could he be? I know this turf like the back of my hand and I haven't found him anywhere.

Although the sun is shining, the cold pierces through my hands I have almost lost complete feeling in my hands.

Oh, oh, I hear a noise. what could it be? The sweat on my forehead, ignoring the cold, runs down the left side of my nose. Should I turn around, or should I run? I slowly turn my head, scared to death of what I might see.

SMACK!! The next thing I know I'm lying on the ground with my face in the snow. All I can hear is Tim rolling around on the ground next to me, laughing like it was going out of style.

Production by Inkit